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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [UNGA](#) [NO](#)
SUBJECT: NORWAY CONSIDERS SUPPORTING GOLDSTONE UNGA RESOLUTION

REF: 10 STATE 15722

DERIVED FROM: DSCG 05-1 (B), (D)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: The GON seems to want to support the new Goldstone resolution being considered at the UN General Assembly (UNGA), but cannot until problematic language on a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention is removed. No final decision has yet been taken. Our GON interlocutors called the resolution being considered "more balanced than the former resolution," from which Norway abstained. End Summary.

¶2. (C) On February 22, Poloff was met by Torunn Viste, Assistant Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Middle East section, and Vebjorn Heines, Coordinator of Human Rights Council (HRC) issues in the MFA Section for Human Rights and Democracy.

¶3. (C) Viste said that it was too early to say what Norway's position was on the resolution, as they had just received the text, but in general the text was "more balanced than the former resolution." Heines said that Norway had been vocal and clear that the problem with the previous resolutions in both the HRC and UNGA was that they endorsed the Goldstone report in its entirety. Norway's abstentions, said Heines, never meant that Norway was not concerned about the issues described in the report. Heines said that Norway came openly with suggestions for amendments to the previous resolutions, and was merely unsuccessful on those occasions in changing them sufficiently to avoid an abstention.

¶4. (C) Heines characterized the resolution now being considered in the UNGA as "benign," with one exception: the call for a conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Geneva Convention in Switzerland. Heines characterized this as the one "sharpening" vis-a-vis the former resolution, and said it probably was necessary to keep the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) on board. Heines said that he was surprised that the OIC was on board with such a gentle resolution as it is. Nevertheless, according to Heines, Norway probably will not be able to accept the Geneva Convention paragraph (paragraph 4). Heines and Viste agreed that setting up such a conference would be practically impossible within the stated five-month time frame, and in any case such a meeting was unwarranted and would not have concrete results. Heines said that Switzerland would likely be reluctant because it would be doubtful that the conference would strengthen International Humanitarian Law.

¶5. (C) Early on in the conversation, and in response to one of reftel talking points, Heines pointedly asked poloff, "Is it the position of the U.S. Government that this issue should be kept in

the HRC, and action should be taken there?" Heines intimated that the UNGA resolution was significantly more benign than what could be expected from a vote in the HRC. Poloff responded, in part, that the USG did believe UN action should be confined to the HRC, and the USG did not believe it was likely that a resolution in the HRC could be staved off given that there would be two reports on Goldstone presented there in March. Heines, while not disagreeing with the latter point, suggested that the USG put forward, or work with other countries to put forward, an alternative resolution in the HRC that would be less harsh than what would otherwise result.

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